

## **SERVICE OF WELCOME FOR REDCAR BAPTISTS TO JOIN WITH REDCAR URC**

For some time members of Redcar United Reformed have worshiped with Redcar Baptists on alternative Sundays. After some extensive planning it was agreed that the Baptist church would take up permanent residence with Redcar URC in their building in Station Road.

On the 5th, February, a Service of Welcome was held. The church was full with Baptist, Redcar URC members, and from other members of churches in the Teesside area - plus representatives from our Northern Synod covering the north east of England.

The atmosphere of the service was one of excitement and expectancy for the promise that two fellowships coming together will help to revitalise both. At the end of the initial introduction the whole congregation was invited to say: in the name of Jesus welcome - a declaration that was repeated at even higher volume and with enthusiasm.

Following this a small singing group led the whole congregation to stand and sing in the praise of our Lord Jesus Christ, before a Baptist leader introduced the signing of the document that enshrines the commitment of both churches the United Reformed Church and the Baptist Church of Redcar to join together in faithful fellowship together. The Reverend David Herbert Synod moderator signed on behalf of the United Reformed Church and then gave a sermon on the theme of unity.

In his homily the Reverend Herbert describe unity like being anointed with oil that covers the whole body. It is a gift of grace, a shared vision, fresh hope and purpose, which will work not my strength of mine but by God is good Grace. Coming together as one body is not an act of people who are risk averse, but every person in this combined fellowship has a ministry to deliver. This will have many demands needing God's guiding strength to reach the goal that our Lord Jesus is set us to achieve here on Earth.

On the night before his arrest Jesus prayed for unity. This unity wants to live out the reconciliation at the heart of the gospel - the good news. All need to be as one when this adventure sets out to take the fellowship to new exciting places where the kingdom of God may be established on Earth.

The service ended with the enthusiastic sing of the hymn: How great thou art.

## **FELLOWSHIP SERVICE**

An important part of the constitution of the URC is that the church must be always be prepared to change its customary practices to take account of changing circumstances or social conditions. Being in a vacancy. for nearly seven years the absence of a minister raises the question of a lack of spiritual direction. To address this problem Guisborough Church have agreed to try out the idea of a 'Fellowship' service. This form of worship is were all worshippers are encouraged to take part, offering their own contributions, rather than having a preacher as leader, as it were, acting as a teacher. The hope is that this form of worship will be effective in strengthen faith as we learn from each other.

The first Fellowship Service was on Sunday, 12th, February. Apart from the first hymn the others were chosen by members of the congregation. For the opening prayers we had presented to us all the members and friends of the church listed before us - reminding of who we are, showing concern for those not present, reflecting on how we can help and offering prayers.

A dramatic Sketch entitled: To be a Christian, was presented. The theme was based on the idea that if you were to prosecuted for being a Christian would there be enough evidence to convict you. This challenge to our personal faith was an idea first presented by the American evangelist Billy Graham during his revival campaigns in Britain during the 1950s. It is an idea that we all need to reflect on from time to time in our journey of faith through out our lives.

. Prayers, in the reformed tradition, by famous church men such as Martin Luther, Thomas Cramner and John Calvin were read.

From there we moved onto more difficult territory: the lectionary Bible readings of the day and commentaries on their meaning. Out of the four readings listed Matthew chapter 5 was chosen. The subject covered was that of adultery and divorce - a difficult area, which after the delivery of

a commentary it was considered as a subject for our present prayers.

The service was ended with the singing the hymn: Guide me, O thou great Jehovah, it's message of confidence in God, something to take with us in the task of strengthening our faith.

## **QUEEN'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE FOR THE BRIDGE**

The Bridge Association have been presented with The Queens award for voluntary service by Mrs Joanna Ropner, the Lord Lietenant for North Yorkshire. The presentation was made to Roland Miller the chairman of the trustees of the Bridge in St Nicholas's Parish Hall.

The Bridge have served people in Guisborough, with various community projects, over a period of 21 years and have deservedly received this prestigious award.

The workers and volunteers for the bridge may be justly proud of this great achievement.

### **Bridge News Letter.**

The first week of January we received our new posters including Her Majesty's emblem. January was challenging as we had to complete transferring donated stock to the new community grocery and food bank, then run through training for volunteers whom had offered their time.

Joanna brought Kim, from Loftus Footprints to trainer us so we all operate from the same 'hymn sheet' and she really did go through how the shop would work with volunteers advising and serving. Throughout January we have steadily increased the client lists through referrals from GP social subscribers, schools and elderly care settings such as Hinton Court. We will eventually be helping a further 50 to 60 families and individuals every single week.

Thank you. We have been blessed with many small and large donation across the Christmas period and were about to receive a generous donation of £1000. However this local person change their mind after having a

short conversation: instead they offered to cover the cost of a fridge and freezer at £1300 for the community shop, which was absolutely fantastic. This gives us more scope to provide healthy meals, or for the food bank and community shop clients to cook their own cheap, yet healthy fresh meals. Additionally it means we can accept meat and 8 dairy products. Moving forward we would really like to join up with the charity, Fair Share.

We used Thursday's Soup & Roll as an advice drop in and were joined by eight community groups. We have kept different information leaflets in order to 'signpost' people with help for the heating, benefits checks mental well-being and crime prevention.

Looking ahead. Bridge 2Youth hope to appoint a second project worker. Counsellor Sheila Holyoke is hoping to give Bridge 2 parents a donation for sewing machines to be in use by Easter.

And in March representatives from 'Middlesbrough Environmental City are giving a slow cooker demonstration with Bridge to parents and some other other project cooks. Funding through Neighbourly has been secured for food and farm which enable us to give two days worth of lunchtime sessions during half term and offer this to families across Guisborough.

We are always in awe of how much we do with just three staff members and our wonderful volunteers and trustees in the heart of Guisborough's community.

#### **LENT services in Guisborough.**

Wednesday, 8th. 7.00pm Guisborough Methodist

Thursday, 16th, 11.30am Guisborough United reformed Church (worship led by Guisborough Christian Fellowship)

Thursday, 23rd, Guisborough and United Reformed Church.

Friday 31st, 7.00pm. St Paulinus

#### **APRIL**

Wednesday, 5th, Stations of the Cross  
St Paulinus. ( outdoor event.

Meet at wooden cross)

#### **SERVICES IN MARCH at 10.00am.**

5th Dr Donna Moore - Guisborough

12th Guisfolk - AGM meeting.

19th —

26th —

Everyone will be welcome at our services. Come to worship, or to learn more about more faith in Jesus, or simply to find some good friends.

#### **COFFEE MORNING AND PRAYER MEETING**

Every Thursday there is a coffee morning in the church hall from 9.30 to 11 am, followed by a prayer meeting at 11:30 am until noon.

Please pop in, whenever you can, on the market day and you will find a cheerful welcome.

**March 2023**

## **GUISBOROUGH UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**



*Founded 1798*

56, Westgate, Guisborough.

**News Letter**

**March 2023**

**Secretary 01287 637273**